

Management Recommendations (Plan pages 23-29)

Scopan Unit	Actions taken/Comments:
<u>Natural Resource Management Issues</u>	
1. The Bureau will not perform any timber management in this area [potential future Ecological Reserve on Scopan Mountain], which will be temporarily designated as wildlife dominant until future decisions about ecological reserve additions are made. The current snowmobile Ridge Trail will be a “developed recreation class I” segment through the wildlife dominant area. Any future ecological reserve designation should exclude the motorized Ridge Trail from the ecological reserve boundary.	<p>No timber management activities have occurred during this plan period.</p> <p>The Ridge Trail has been upgraded to a snowmobile/ATV trail.</p> <p>No decision on the designation of an Ecological Reserve has been made.</p>
<u>Recreation Management Issues</u>	
2. Continue to work with ATV interests to curb the current unauthorized use of the Ridge Trail over Scopan Mountain.	NA (The Ridge Trail has been upgraded for ATV use).
3. Designate the trail for ATV use when (a) ongoing cooperation from the ATV community has effectively curbed illegal use of existing trail; (b) an assessment of the trail and a detailed engineered plan for needed improvements is completed; (c) funding sources to accomplish needed improvements have been secured and (d) an improved, well-designed trail is in place.	The trail upgrade to allow ATV use was completed in 2011, with the cooperation of ATV interests. Feedback on the change has been positive and the trail is very popular.
4. Determine, as resources allow, if there would be sufficient demand for this [non-motorized] trail [connecting Haystack Mountain, the Scopan Unit, and Aroostook State Park], and if cooperation could be obtained from private landowners between the Unit and the State Park. Work with Aroostook State Park Manager, the Town of Castle Hill, and private landowners in this endeavor.	<p>ATV/snowmobile trails are interconnected with abutting landowners.</p> <p>BPL is engaged in ongoing discussion with Aroostook State Park and local Towns related to developing an extensive non-motorized trail system.</p>
5. Determine if there would be sufficient demand for non-motorized trails that connect to the snowmobile Ridge Trail, and continue to the fire tower. Before building a trail to the fire tower, determine the expense of improving the tower to make safe for public use, and improve the tower if funding can be obtained and demand can be demonstrated.	The 3.5 mile Scopan Ridge hiking trail loop was constructed in 2013, including trailhead parking with vault toilet and kiosk. There is strong local interest in connecting this hiking trail with the Haystack Trail and Aroostook State Park trails. Commercial leases/equipment on the tower now preclude public use.
6. Continue communications with the owners of the Walker siding facility about the possibility of re-opening their facility to the public. If not possible, assess the feasibility of various sites in the Unit for	Although there have been some discussions regarding this boating facility, no action has been taken.

providing boating access. A site will be chosen if it is: cost-effective, able to accommodate an ADA accessible facility, and can accommodate a full service motor boat facility without violating water quality or other environmental standards. If a suitable site can be located, and funding can be obtained, build a second public boat launching facility on Scopan Lake.	Water depth measurements have been taken along the northeast shoreline, where a suitable site for a new boat launch site may be identified in proximity to the public use road.
7. Assess the possibility of providing one or more trails from the public use roads to existing lakeshore campsites, with parking areas near the road. Maintain the primitive nature of the lakeshore campsites. Work with the ATV community to consider a camping area near the ATV trails around Squapan Mountain that could be connected to a regional series of ATV camping shelters spaced about a day's drive apart. Provide a day use site at the "old camp yard" site, including a picnic table with a shelter and a privy.	<p>No action has been taken on potential trails to lakeshore campsites.</p> <p>A day use and campsite with Adirondack shelter, picnic table, fire ring and pit privy was constructed in 2011 at the "old camp yard" site on the west side of Scopan Ridge, on the ATV trail. In addition a short hiking trail loop was constructed from the campsite.</p>
<u><i>Timber Management Recommendations</i></u>	
<p>8. Maintain the high proportion of large, high quality trees and size and species diversity. More specifically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the spruce component in softwood stands and maintain fir at present levels. White pine, which currently makes up one percent of the softwood type volume, should be increased. • Maintain mixedwood stands in current species assemblages with the exception of beech which will be decreased when stems are diseased and have poor crowns. • Encourage high quality sugar maple, yellow birch and spruce on hardwood stands and retain red maple and beech of acceptable quality. • Beech should be retained for wildlife when crowns are good (even if bark is diseased) and when bark is smooth. • Designate areas as HCVF areas, which will in some cases correspond with special protection areas and other MNAP designated exemplary communities. 	Ongoing.
<u><i>Transportation and Administrative Issues</i></u>	
9. Work with abutting landowners to facilitate Bureau staff access to portions of the Unit not easily accessed by public use roads. Seek deeded access over abutting lands.	Ongoing. BPL constructed a new public access road on the east side of Scopan Ridge in 2013.
10. Work cooperatively with minority owners to pursue full Bureau ownership of lands within the Unit.	Ongoing.

Scraggly Lake Unit**Actions taken/Comments:**

<u><i>Natural Resource Management Issues</i></u>	
1. Manage exemplary communities in consultation with MNAP. The Hemlock Forest is allocated as a special protection area, and will not be subject to timber harvesting. The Leatherleaf Boggy Fen and Spruce Larch Wooded Bog are within wildlife dominant areas where harvesting will be minimal.	Ongoing.
2. Monitor loon nests and place signage at boat launching facility to warn boaters about using caution during nesting season. Continue to work with guides that land float planes on Scraggly Lake and encourage them to continue to avoid landing on the lake near nests during nesting and fledging stages.	
<u><i>Recreation Management Issues</i></u>	
3. Continue to communicate with the local snowmobile club, the Maine Warden Service, and IF&W regarding any future grooming of the club trail through the Unit. Consider sledder safety and the trail's impact on wintering deer when making the decision to groom the trail from year to year.	Ongoing.
4. Maintain public use road open to ATV use, but do not connect it with a larger ATV trail system, in respect to the surrounding landowner's policy, and to maintain a quiet and remote recreational experience on the Unit.	Ongoing.
5. Assess the interest and feasibility of building three new trails on the Unit—one connecting the campground to the Owl's Head Peninsula, one from the Green Pond campsite to the Hemlock Forest, and one from Scraggly Lake to Ireland Pond. Seek funding for these trails if they are found to be feasible and have sufficient interest from the public.	In 2010, BPL constructed an Adirondack shelter at the Scraggly Lake walk-in campsite at the west end of the lake. A hiking trail from the main campground to Owl's Head Trail was constructed in 2011 and 2012.
6. When funding is obtained, make ADA improvements to the Scraggly Lake boating facility and a campsite near the facility.	ADA-compliant vault toilets were installed in 2011 and 2014 at the boat launch and a nearby campsite.
<u><i>Timber Management Recommendations</i></u>	
7. Grow high value timber products while (chiefly sawlogs and veneer) while maintaining visual integrity and enhancing a diversity of wildlife habitat. More specifically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favor high value and longer lived species such as white pine, spruce, hemlock, sugar maple, and yellow birch. 	Ongoing.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain softwood stands in that type, with spruce the preferred species. Favor white pine where it grows and maintain hemlock on some sites, and retain fir as an important component of regeneration. Encourage a late successional character and continue to provide valuable deer wintering areas. • Maintain mixedwood type on current mixedwoods stands that are well stocked. Work toward a late successional character, and favor high quality spruce, maple, birch and hemlock. On less well stocked mixedwood sites, retain overstory if windfirm, and favor younger spruce, pine and hemlock (possibly returning some sites back to softwood). • Encourage high quality and diverse hardwood stands to remain in that condition. Rehabilitate low quality hardwood stands by reducing diseased beech with poor crowns and favoring higher quality sugar maple, yellow birch and spruce. • Retain beech for wildlife when crowns are good (even if bark is diseased) and when bark is smooth. • Designate some areas as High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF), a designation recognized by the certification programs the Bureau is enrolled in. Manage these areas to maintain key characteristics such as large, old trees. 	
<u>Transportation and Administrative Issues</u>	
8. Continue to block motorized access to Ireland pond 700 feet from the pond at the location where a spur trail leaves the public use road. (This is the location of the current barricade).	Ongoing.
9. Implement special use permits for boats stored on the Ireland Pond property.	BPL has taken no action on this to date.

Recommendations for Smaller Lots

Garfield Plantation Lot	Actions taken/Comments:
Focus forest management on producing multiple age classes over time. Grow quality spruce, fir, hemlock and hardwoods and retain some large old hemlock for wildlife. The age diversity in the overstory will help in improving overall diversity and achieving these goals. Perform timber stand improvements if commercially feasible, and retain some old hemlock as wildlife legacy trees. Specifically, a	Timber harvest started in 2009 and completed in 2010.

harvest is scheduled for 2009 and 2010, which will improve stand health, quality, growth, and structure.	
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Hammond Lot	Actions taken/Comments:
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Manage for quality sawtimber as species mix and fertility allows for this.	A prescription was completed in 2013; road construction was bid and contracted in 2014. These actions are per the Region's new contracted logging approach by which road work is contracted separately from harvesting.
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Moro Plantation East and West Lots	Actions taken/Comments:
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Apply standard Bureau silviculture to produce high quality timber products and maintain and enhance conditions for a wide range of wildlife species. Younger aspen rich stands may warrant patch cut management for ruffed grouse.	No activity on these lots. The Bureau has recently discussed access with the abutting landowner who controls access to the lots.
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Nashville Plantation North Lot	Actions taken/Comments:
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Manage timber using exemplary silviculture, maintain and enhance deer wintering areas, take advantage of the site quality, and focus on visual concerns. Due to the Lot's easy access, it can serve as a showcase for good forest management.	No activity on this lot.
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Nashville Plantation South Lot	Actions taken/Comments:
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Conduct silviculture to produce fine spruce, fir and hardwood sawtimber. A 1996 prescription called for possible harvests in 2015 on much of the Lot.	A new prescription was completed in 2014.
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Oxbow Plantation Lots	Actions taken/Comments:
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Consult with MHPC or the Bureau Historic Sites Specialist before conducting any recreational or road improvements along the shore of the Aroostook River.	The public access road on this lot is maintained by Seven Islands. Bureau cost-shared routine repairs (which do not require MHPC consultation) with Seven Islands in 2014.
Manage the forest to retain and enhance the multi-age character of most stands. The horizontal and vertical diversity which makes	The prescription was completed in 2008. Harvests were conducted in 2012 and 2014.

habitat for a variety of species should be maintained. Encourage sugar maple and spruce, maintain hemlock, and retain vigorous beech.	Significant blowdown event occurred in 2013. An access road serving the area between Smith Brook and the Aroostook River was constructed in 2014.
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Sheridan Lot	Actions taken/Comments:
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Manage the forest for decent hardwoods on the acres suitable for growing them, and quality softwood sawtimber on all other areas.	A prescription was completed in 2014.
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T 9 R 5 WELS Lot	Actions taken/Comments:
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Manage forest resources to grow quality softwood on about half the acres, while the rest will grow cedar, spruce and pines at slow rates.	A significant blowdown event occurred in 2013. A salvage harvest was conducted in 2014.
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T 12 R 8 WELS Lot	Actions taken/Comments:
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Manage forest resources to maintain or increase the high spruce component on softwood and mixedwood stands. Quality hardwoods, especially sugar maple, will also be encouraged on these sites. Hardwood stands will be encouraged to grow maple and birch sawlogs. Good beech will be maintained to produce mast for wildlife. Harvest to release young trees of desirable species.	Timber harvesting started in 2011 and was completed in 2012.
Work to minimize the impact of mining spoil on the Lot, if rights are exercised.	There was no mining activity in this period.

T 13 R 5 WELS Lot	Actions taken/Comments:
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Manage the forest to encourage deer wintering areas extensively where they have historically existed by increasing softwood type. Manage for quality softwood sawtimber on all other areas, except fertile upland areas now dominated by sugar maple and beech will be retained as such.	A timber harvest was completed in 2009.
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Monitoring and Evaluation (Plan pages 106-107)**Actions taken/Comments:**

Implementation of Plan Recommendations <p>The Bureau will develop, within two years of Plan adoption, an action plan for implementing and monitoring the management recommendations in this Plan. This will include an assignment of priorities and timeframes for accomplishment that will be utilized to determine work priorities and budgets on an annual basis. The Bureau will document annually its progress in implementing the recommendations, plans for the coming year, and adjustments to the priorities and timeframes as needed.</p>	<p>Individual projects are planned and budgeted for during annual planning exercises. New initiatives, particularly larger projects, are planned in two year cycles. The detailed action plan for implementing and monitoring management has been replaced by the 5-year Plan review and BPL yearly planning process that prioritizes projects based on the Plan recommendations and resources available.</p>
Recreation – Public Use <p>Data on recreational use is helpful in allocating staff and monetary resources for management of the properties throughout the Plan area, and in determining the public's response to the opportunities being provided.</p>	<p>Informal data collection by BPL staff is occurring on a periodic basis, concurrent with site maintenance and other duties.</p>
Recreation – Use Impacts <p>In addition to gathering data on use, the Bureau will monitor public use to determine:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) whether improvements to existing facilities or additional facilities might be needed and compatible with general objectives; (2) whether additional measures are needed to ensure that recreational users have a high quality experience (which could be affected by the numbers of users, and interactions among users with conflicting interests); (3) whether use is adversely affecting sensitive natural resources or the ecology of the area; (4) whether measures are needed to address unforeseen safety issues; (5) whether changing recreational uses and demands present the need or opportunity for adjustments to existing facilities and management; and (6) whether any changes are needed in the management of recreation in relation to other management objectives, including protection or enhancement of wildlife habitat and forest management. 	<p>Ongoing, through informal observations related to recreation management.</p>

Wildlife	
<p>The Bureau, through its Wildlife Biologist and Technician, routinely conducts a variety of species monitoring activities statewide. The following are monitoring activities that are ongoing or anticipated for the Aroostook Hills Region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The Bureau will cooperate with IF&W in the monitoring of game species, including deer, moose, grouse, and black bear; (2) The Bureau will monitor loon nests on Scraggly Lake and look for impacts of recreation; (3) The Bureau will identify and map significant wildlife habitat such as vernal pools and den trees in the process of developing its detailed forest management prescriptions. The boundaries of any sensitive natural communities will also be delineated on the ground at this time. Any significant natural areas or wildlife habitat will then be subject to appropriate protections. 	Ongoing.
Timber Management	
<p>Local work plans, called prescriptions, are prepared by professional foresters in accordance with Bureau policies specified in its <i>Integrated Resource Policy</i>, with input from other staff. These documents are then peer-reviewed prior to approval. Preparation and layout of all timber sales involve field staff looking at every acre to be treated. Trees to be harvested are generally hand marked on a majority of these acres. Regional field staff provide regular on-site supervision of harvest activities, with senior staff visiting these sites on a less frequent basis. After the harvest is completed, roads, trails, and water crossings are discontinued as appropriate, although some management roads may remain open to vehicle travel. Changes in stand type resulting from the harvest are then recorded so that the Bureau's GIS system can be updated.</p>	Ongoing.
<p>The Bureau is currently developing a post-harvest monitoring plan to assist forest managers in assessing harvest outcomes on all managed lands. The monitoring plan will also address water quality and Best Management Practices (BMPs) utilized during harvest activities.</p>	Ongoing.
<p>Third party monitoring is done mainly through the forest certification programs of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the</p>	<p>An annual FSC/SFI audit occurred in the Northern region in 2013. A full FSC/SFI audit occurred in 2011. There</p>

Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). Each program conducts rigorous investigations of both planning and on-ground practices. An initial audit by both programs was completed in 2001, with certification awarded in 2002. A full re-audit of both programs was conducted in the fall of 2006 with certification granted in 2007. The Bureau is also subject to compliance audits during the 5-year certification period.	were no findings or corrective action requests (CARs) specific to Northern Region lands resulting from these audits.
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Issues for Advisory Committee Attention

New Issues or Circumstances Not Addressed in the Plan:

The Bureau is considering permitting a maple sugaring operation on up to 300 acres of sugar maple-dominated stands on Scopan Mountain. The 300 acres would be within the 1,784 acres on Scopan Ridge assigned a Wildlife dominant resource allocation, which was applied as a temporary allocation pending review of the area as a potential ecological reserve. To allow this new use, a 300 acre area (the precise boundaries of which are not yet determined) would be reallocated from the Wildlife dominant resource allocation to Timber Management, with a management recommendation that the area be managed as a late successional stand. A maple sugaring lease would be issued consistent with this allocation and late successional forest management. No commercial timber harvesting would occur.

Other Items of Special Concern or Interest:

None.